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ABSTRACT

An evaluation of telephone registration was conducted in September 1979 by William Rainey Harper College (WRHC) to determine registrants' satisfaction with the process and to identify difficulties they had in reaching the terminal operator. A questionnaire was mailed to 363 students randomly selected from those who had registered by telephone for fall 1979; 77% responded. The survey revealed: (1) difficulties in reaching the terminal operator were more pronounced during the first days of registration, e.g., on the first day, 14% of the respondents reached the operator on their first dial, while on the third and fourth days, 36% were successful on the first dial; (2) 89% of the respondents were able to register for all the courses they wanted, and 79% were able to register for courses at the times they wanted; (3) only 22.6% indicated that talking to an academic advisor before telephone registration would have helped; (4) 60% of the respondents cited "continuing an education program" as their reason for enrollment, while 18.3% cited "personal growth," 17.6% cited "interest in specific courses or programs," 17.2% cited "encouragement by employer," and 11.1% cited "preparation for a career change"; (5) 68% said the course they enrolled in was exactly what they expected; (6) 66% retained the same schedule they registered for; (7) 89% had no interest in carpooling; and (8) 59% paid their fees in person. The study report is composed largely of data tables and includes the questionnaire. (KL)

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# SURVEY OF TELEPHONE REGISTRANTS FALL 1979

Volume 10, Number 13

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JC 810 590

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## ABSTRACT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO PROVIDE PARTIAL EVALUATION OF TELEPHONE REGISTRATION. AMONG THE 5,354 STUDENTS WHO REGISTERED BY TELEPHONE IN THE FALL SEMESTER, 363 WERE SAMPLED TO SURVEY BY MAIL. AFTER APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES, A RETURN RATE OF 77 PERCENT WAS ATTAINED.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY SHOWED: SURPRISINGLY OVER HALF REGISTERED FOR THE FIRST TIME OVER THE TELEPHONE. OVER A FOURTH GOT THROUGH ON THE FIRST CALL BUT ALMOST 19 PERCENT DIALED MORE THAN 10 TIMES AS THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF DIALS AMOUNTED TO 3.3. THE NUMBER OF DIALS NECESSARY TO GET THROUGH TO A TERMINAL OPERATOR VARIED WITH THE DAY THE STUDENT REGISTERED. ON THE FIRST DAY OF PHONE REGISTRATION ONLY 14 PERCENT GOT THROUGH ON THE FIRST DIAL WHILE OVER A THIRD DIALED MORE THAN 10 TIMES. THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF DIALS WAS 6.1. BY THE SECOND DAY THE DIFFICULTY EASED SOMEWHAT AS 20 PERCENT WERE ABLE TO GET THROUGH ON THE FIRST DIAL WHILE 23 PERCENT DIALED MORE THAN TEN TIMES AND THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF DIALS WAS 3.9. DURING THE THIRD AND FOURTH DAYS, THE DIFFICULTY EASED EVEN MORE AS 36 PERCENT GOT THROUGH ON THE FIRST DIAL WHILE ONLY 6 PERCENT HAD TO DIAL MORE THAN TEN TIMES AND THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF DIALS WAS REDUCED TO 2.3.

OTHER THAN THE DIFFICULTY OF DIALING INTO A TERMINAL OPERATOR, TELEPHONE REGISTRANTS WERE QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS.

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## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to provide a partial evauluation of telephone registration as conducted during the fall 1979 semester. This particular survey was requested by the President and was intended to find out the difficulty of calling into a terminal operator for registration and to determine students' satisfaction with the outcome of telephone registration as well as other characteristics about these students.

## Population Surveyed

From the list of the 5,354 students who registered by telephone for the fall 1979 semester, a sample of 363 students were selected at random. After the original mailing and appropriate follow-up effort the following response rate was obtained:

### Survey Response Rates Among Sample of Students Who Registered By Telephone Fall - 1979

| | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Mail Survey Responses | 206 | 56.7 |
| Telephone Survey Responses | 74 | 20.4 |
| Total Responses | 280 | 77.1 |
| Refused to Respond | 1 | .3 |
| Unable to Locate | 11 | 3.0 |
| Unable to Contact | 71 | 19.6 |
| Total Sample of Telephone Registrants | 363 | 100 |

### Sampling Bias by Day of Registration

| Day of Telephone Registration | Total Headcount Registered by Telephone | Number in Survey Sample | Sample Percentage of Target Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| First | 1,884 | 71.83 | 3.81 |
| Second | 1,635 | 87.34 | 5.34 |
| Third | 1,253 | 56.83 | 4.54 |
| Fourth | 582 | 14 | 2.41 |
| All Four Days | 5,354 | 230* | 4.30 |

* Another 50 didn't answer this item or couldn't recall the specific day.

Thus as can be seen from examining the preceeding table, the sample was over represented by second day registrants and under represented by first and fourth day registrants. The results of the survey will have to be interpreted in that light.

Method

The survey instrument shown in the appendix was mailed to the target population. After three weeks a second instrument was mailed to the non-respondants. After three more weeks, those still not responding were surveyed over the telephone.

Conclusions

Surprisingly over half registered for the first time over the telephone. Over a fourth got through on the first call but almost 19 percent dialed more than 10 times as the median number of dials amounted to 3.3. The number of dials necessary to get through to a terminal operator varied with the day the student registered. On the first day of phone registration only 14 percent got through on the first dial while over a third dialed more than 10 times. The median number of dials was 6.1. By the second day the difficulty eased somewhat as 20 percent were able to get through on the first dial while 23 percent dialed more than ten times and the median number of dials was 3.9. During the third and fourth days the difficulty eased even more as 36 percent got through on the first dial while only 6 percent had to dial more than ten times and the median number of dials was reduced to 2.3.

Other than the difficulty of dialing into a terminal operator, telephone registrants fared very well despite the fact that 22.6 percent of the sample indicated that talking to a counselor before telephone registration would have helped them. Some 89 percent were able to register for all the courses they wanted and 79 percent were able to register for all these courses at all the times they desired. Moreover, over 90 percent reported the courses turned out to be either exactly what they expected or nearly so and satisfactory. About two third of the sample have since retained their exact schedule while another ten percent have added courses.

The principle reason for telephone registrants enrolling at Harper during the fall 1979 semester as reported by 60 percent of the sample was simply to continue their educational program toward an already established goal. Other reasons given were personal

growth (18.3 Pct), specific courses or programs offered (17.6 Pct), encouragement by employer (17.2 Pct) and preparation for a career change (11.1 Pct).

In other findings almost ninety percent said they were not interested in car pooling. Finally, despite the fact these students registered by telephone, almost sixty percent came to campus personally to pay their tuition.

# D E T A I L E D

# R E S U L T S

Survey of Students Registering by

Telephone at Harper College Fall 1979

| Previous Experience Registering by Telephone | | | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| First time for registering by telephone | | | 144 | 51.6 |
| Have registered by telephone before | | | 135 | 48.6 |
| | | | 279 | 100 |
| **Time of Telephone Registration** | | | | |
| First day | Aug. 21 | Tuesday | 71.83 | 31.2 |
| Second day | Aug. 22 | Wednesday | 87.34 | 38.0 |
| Third day | Aug. 23 | Thursday | 56.83 | 24.7 |
| Fourth day | Aug. 24 | Friday | 14 | 6.1 |
| | Sub Total | | 230 | 100 |
| | Couldn't recall specific day | | 34 | 12.1 |
| | Didn't answer | | 16 | 5.7 |
| | Total | | 280 | |
| **Times Students had to Dial Before They Got Terminal Operator** | | | | |
| Got through on first call | | | 71 | 25.7 |
| Twice | | | 41 | 14.9 |
| Three or four times | | | 65 | 23.6 |
| Five to seven times | | | 31 | 11.2 |
| Eight to ten times | | | 16 | 5.8 |
| More than ten times | | | 52 | 18.8 |
| | Sub Total | | 276 | 100 |
| | Didn't answer | | 4 | 1.4 |
| | Total | | 280 | |
| | Median times called | | 3.3 | |
| **Success in Getting Courses Desired** | | | | |
| Registered for all courses wanted | | | 250 | 89.3 |
| Registered for the number of courses wanted but some or all were second choice courses | | | 23 | 8.2 |
| Registered for fewer courses than originally wanted | | | 7 | 2.5 |
| | Total | | 280 | 100 |

Times Student Had To Dial In Order To Register By Telephone
At Harper College - Fall 1979 - By Day Of Registration

| Number of Times Dialed | Day of Registration: First Day N | First Day PCT | Second Day N | Second Day PCT | Third Day N | Third Day PCT | Fourth Day N | Fourth Day PCT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Got through on first call | 10 | 13.9 | 18 | 20.0 | 22 | 37.3 | 5 | 35.7 |
| Twice | 9 | 12.5 | 12 | 13.3 | 12 | 20.3 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Three or four times | 11 | 15.3 | 21 | 23.4 | 16 | 27.1 | 5 | 35.7 |
| Five to seven times | 11 | 15.3 | 11 | 12.2 | 6 | 10.2 | 1 | 7.2 |
| Eight to ten times | 6 | 8.3 | 7 | 7.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| More than ten times | 25 | 34.7 | 21 | 23.3 | 3 | 5.1 | 1 | 7.1 |
| TOTAL | 72 | 100 | 90 | 100 | 59 | 100 | 14 | 100 |
| Median Times Dialed | 6.1 | | 3.9 | | 2.1 | | 2.5 | |

## Success in Getting Times Desired

| | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Was able to register for all the times desired | 221 | 78.9 |
| Some or all of the courses are at non-preferred times | 41 | 14.6 |
| Some or all of the courses are at inconvenient times | 14 | 5.0 |
| Student is not taking courses because time they were offered was too inconvenient | 22 | 7.9 |

## Principle Reason Registered for Courses This Semester

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Simply continuing education program toward already established goal | 165 | 59.1 |
| Personal growth | 51 | 18.3 |
| Specific courses or programs offered at Harper | 49 | 17.6 |
| Encouraged by employer to keep up or prepare for promotion | 48 | 17.2 |
| Preparing for career change | 31 | 11.1 |
| Friends or relatives encouraged student | 20 | 7.2 |
| Unemployed now & student has time to continue education | 10 | 3.6 |
| Pressure on job eased & student has time to continue education | 9 | 3.2 |
| Literature received in mail | 8 | 2.9 |
| Attending four year college but can satisfy a requirement at Harper more conveniently | 4 | 1.4 |
| Shopping center display attracted student | 3 | 1.1 |
| Wanted to begin four year degree program | 3 | 1.1 |
| Visit to Harper campus motivated re-enrollment | 2 | .7 |
| Reputation & quality of faculty attracted student | 2 | .7 |
| Wanted to improve job skills | 2 | .7 |
| Transferred from another college - wanted to continue | 2 | .7 |
| Harper van attracted student | 1 | .4 |
| Harper was inexpensive | 1 | .4 |
| Enjoyed past courses so much | 1 | .4 |
| Looking for direction in life | 1 | .4 |
| Moved into Harper's district | 1 | .4 |
| Attracted by building M | 1 | .4 |
| Beginning to prepare for first career | 1 | .4 |

## Availability of Information About Courses

| | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Course was exactly what was expected | 186.5 | 68.1 |
| Course not exactly what was expected but satisfactory | 62 | 22.6 |
| Course not what was expected and will not be as beneficial as had hoped | 17 | 6.2 |
| Course not what was expected and is entirely unsatisfactory | 8.5 | 3.1 |
| Sub-Total | 274 | 100 |
| No response | 6 | 2.1 |
| Total | 280 | |

## Potential Help of an Academic Advisor

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Did talk to an academic advisor before registering | 8 | 2.9 |
| Talking to an academic advisor before registering would have helped student | 62 | 22.6 |
| Not sure if academic advisor would have helped | 64 | 23.4 |
| Talking to an academic advisor would not have helped student | 140 | 51.1 |
| Sub-Total | 274 | 100 |
| No response | 6 | 2.1 |
| Total | 280 | |

## Experience in Course(s) After Registration

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Have retained the same schedule | 185 | 66.3 |
| Since then have added a course(s) | 7 | 2.5 |
| Since then have dropped a course(s) | 64 | 22.9 |
| Course was cancelled | 1 | .4 |
| Since then have both added and dropped a course(s) | 22 | 7.9 |
| Sub-Total | 279 | 100 |
| No response | 1 | .4 |
| Total | 280 | |

## Response to Carpooling

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Registered for carpooling | 0 | 0 |
| Hadn't heard about carpooling but was interested | 29 | 10.5 |
| Not interested in carpooling | 247 | 89.5 |
| Sub-Total | 276 | 100 |
| No response | 4 | 1.4 |
| Total | 280 | |

## Method of Paying Fees

| | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Paid by mail | 109 | 39.6 |
| Paid in person | 164 | 59.7 |
| Didn't pay - dropped out | 2 | .7 |
| Sub-Total | 275 | 100 |
| Didn't recall | 2 | .7 |
| No response | 3 | 1.1 |
| Total | 280 | |

Comments

I like the phone in since I work full-time and don't have time. Keep phone in. 3

I think the telephone registration is excellent especially for people who work during the day. This is the third time I handled it via telephone and I think its fantastic.

Description in newspaper not clear. Had to go to Harper to get newspaper. Never delivered to our area. Churchill subdivision of Schaumburg out of Hoffman Estates post office.

I feel there should be more time available for phone registration. I was on vacation the week of phone registration and had to get someone else to do it for me. Everything worked out alright, but I would have felt better if I could have had the opportunity to register myself.

Just a note since you have asked me all these pertinent questions. Was registration this easy for everyone? I have registered before at fully accredited state universities, community colleges, and a vocational school or two, and have always met with some red tape and bureaucratic hassles--running to assignment committees, getting permission from professors, standing in line, then standing in another line somewhere else. It seems Harper has taken all (or almost all) the bugs out of registration, and the experience was a complete revelation to me. I always knew there had to be a better way and it seems Harper has found it. Thank You!! Also, the operator "registrar" was most efficient, well-informed and brief. A great contrast to previous registerings.

Am quite appreciative to have telephone registration available to me. Keep up the good work.

It would be helpful to know who is going to be your teacher before you begin class. It may prevent some dropping outs. I pick my courses according to convenience of time offered and teacher.

Concerning my dictation and transcription class--when I registered I was not informed of the amount of time required in class i.e. that it met for 2 hours on Wednesday. A suggestion would be that the newspaper note that there is only one class and that you have to attend all the times listed. It would have made it very convenient for me to have known.

Suggest for future convience that the parking permits be sent by mail. 2

Too many people in the course! As the course is a skill subject and difficult for many, the size limits the amount of help any one person can receive from the instructor.

This is my second semester under the Legal Technology program, classes are held at the College of DuPage. Those of us in this particular program had to rely somewhat on word of mouth concerning all particulars. Perhaps the ladies who have been enrolled longer have received literature. I received nothing and I know that there was a change of course content at the last minute. We had quite a large class for Estate Planning in the Spring of 1979. I understand that a number of ladies did not register this Fall because they were under the impression that the class they had already taken would be taught. I don't think anyone notified anyone of the change to Litigation. Even though I am not a district resident I was registered in a unique program and I would have appreciated some notice of the course to be taught this Fall. Naturally, I appreciate the fact that Harper has even attempted to bring this paralegal program to DuPage residents. It would have been a real shame to have had it cancelled because not enough students registered because of the mix-up in courses

and lack of communication with prospective students. There are eleven registered now; I'm sure there could have been more. I hope you will give my comments some thought. Education in the paralegal field is important to me, personally; and I have to wonder if there might not be other small programs such as this that are suffering in attendance because of lack of notification even to those who have shown an interest previously.

The counselors at Harper make a concerted effort to help the students but sometimes fail to note the alternatives the student may take. When one enters a program directly out of high school -- they don't always know what questions to ask of the counselors. Consequently, the wrong direction may be taken simply because the student did not have all the facts.

I registered for Badminton which was presented in your courses/offerings schedule among other classes which were to begin August 27. I was very upset to find out that this course didn't begin until October 22, having made special arrangements at my job for time off. This is not the first time this has happened to me having previously registered for your tennis class which was also presented among your other 16 week courses and also turned out to be only 8 weeks in length. Please make this more clear in your next schedule.

I really think that something should be done for the students who attend full-time at night. I encountered many difficulties in so much as seeing someone who could advise me on classes. All counseling hours seem to be geared for day school students. Also, the lighting system for a college of this size and professionalism is very sad. Can anything be done?

# APPENDIX

William Rainey Harper College
Algonquin and Roselle Roads
Palatine, Illinois 60067
312-397-3000

September 19, 1979

Dear Student:

We at Harper College need to evaluate our registration process occasionally and, at this time, we are looking particularly at telephone registration. To that end, we are surveying a sample of students who registered by telephone this fall at Harper. We need to know how effective this telephone registration was for you, and if you were provided sufficient information about the course(s) for which you registered. In addition, we would like to know the reasons you enrolled this semester at Harper.

This information is very important for our future planning at Harper and, since you are part of a small sample representing all telephone registrants, it is essential that we hear from all of you. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and mail it back in the stamped return envelope provided.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

John A. Lucas

John A. Lucas
Director, Planning and Research

JAL/sb

Enclosure

SURVEY OF STUDENTS REGISTERING BY TELEPHONE
AT HARPER COLLEGE - FALL, 1979

1. Have you ever registered by telephone at Harper? Check (✓) one.

_____A. This is the first time I have ever registered by telephone at Harper College.
_____B. I have registered by telephone at Harper College before.

2. On which day did you register by telephone?

_____A. Tuesday, August 21
_____B. Wednesday, August 22
_____C. Thursday, August 23
_____D. Friday, August 24

3. How many times did you have to dial the Harper registration system before you got through to a terminal operator?

_____A. I got through on the first call.
_____B. Twice
_____C. Three or four times
_____D. Five to seven times
_____E. Eight to ten times
_____F. More than ten times

4. Were you able to register for all the courses you wanted?

_____A. Registered for all the courses I wanted.
_____B. Registered for the number of courses I wanted but some or all of the courses were my second choice.
_____C. Registered for fewer courses than I originally wanted.

5. Were you able to register for the times you wanted for courses? Check (✓) all those which apply.

_____A. I was able to register for all the times I wanted.
_____B. Some or all of the courses I am taking are at non-preferred times.
_____C. Some or all of the courses I am taking are at inconvenient times.
_____D. I am not taking some courses because the times they were offered were too inconvenient for me.

6. What is the principle reason you registered for courses this semester? Check (✓) all those which apply.

_____A. I am simply continuing my education program at Harper toward an already established goal.
_____B. Pressures in my job situation have eased and I now have time again to take courses at Harper.
_____C. My employer has encouraged me to continue my education to keep up in my job area or for promotion.
_____D. I am now unemployed and have time to return to Harper and continue my education.
_____E. I now need to prepare to change careers.
_____F. I saw Harper's van this summer and it encouraged me to return to Harper this fall.
_____G. I received literature in the mail and it encouraged me to enroll at Harper this fall.
_____H. Friends or relatives encouraged me to re-enroll at Harper this fall.
_____I. I just decided that I needed some personal growth or activity this fall.
_____J. A specific course you are offering this semester attracted me.
_____K. A shopping center display encouraged me to enroll this fall.
_____L. I was on campus last spring or this summer for some event and was motivated to re-enroll this fall.
_____M. Other (specify) _____

_____

_____

7. Did you have enough information about the courses for which you registered this semester?

_____A. The course(s) was almost exactly what I expected.
_____B. The course(s) was not exactly what I expected, but as it turns out, it is satisfactory.
_____C. The course(s) was not what I expected and will not be as beneficial to me as I had hoped.
_____D. The course(s) was not what I expected and is entirely unsatisfactory to me.

8. Would talking to an academic advisor before you registered this fall have helped you with your selection of courses and your academic plans?

_____A. Yes
_____B. Not sure
_____C. No

9. After registering by telephone at Harper, did you later change that schedule?

_____A. I have retained the same schedule.
_____B. Since then I have added a course(s).
_____C. Since then I have dropped a course(s).
_____D. Since then I have both dropped a course(s) and added a course(s).

10. Have you registered for carpooling?

_____A. Yes, I have registered
_____B. I have not heard about the carpooling program, but I am interested.
_____C. I am not interested in the carpooling program.

11. How did you pay your fees?

_____A. By mail
_____B. In person